

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W

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FM AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5979

S E C R E T CAPE TOWN 0591

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PLEASE PASS EYES ONLY FOR THE PRESIDENT FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR SF

SUBJ: MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER VORSTER

REF: STATE 085992, CAPE TOWN 0568

1. OVER LUNCH TODAY I CONVEYED TO PRIME MINISTER VORSTER THE POINTS CONTAINED IN YOUR MESSAGE. HE WAS ACCOMPANIED BY FONMIN BOTHA AND DFA SECRETARY BRAND FOURIE. THE LUNCHEON WAS SOMEWHAT HURRIED BECAUSE THE PRIME MINISTER HAD TO HASTEN BACK TO PARLIAMENT FOR THE BUDGET DEBATE.

2. AFTER MY PRESENTATION THE PRIME MINISTER FIRST ASKED THAT I GO OVER THE SECOND PARAGRAPH OF THE POINTS, PARTICULARLY THE SECTION EXPRESSING NEED FOR PROGRESS ON RHODESIA, NAMIBIA AND SOUTH AFRICA. HE THEN INQUIRED WHETHER THE SPECIAL EMISSARY WOULD BE COMING TO SOUTH AFRICA. I TOLD HIM THIS WAS NOT EXCLUDED. IT WOULD DEPEND, HOWEVER, UPON WHETHER SIGNIFICANT CONCRETE DEVELOPMENTS CAN BE ACHIEVED. SUCH DEVELOPMENTS WOULD BE NEEDED IN ORDER TO ESTABLISH A POSITIVE FRAMEWORK FOR CONTACTS WITH A CROSS-SECTION OF SOUTH AFRICANS OF DIFFERENT RACES AND POLITICAL PERSUASIONS

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WHICH A HIGH-LEVEL EMISSARY WOULD BE EXPECTED TO MAKE DURING A VISIT TO SOUTH AFRICA.

3. FONMIN BOTHA THEN ENTERED THE DISCUSSION TO INQUIRE WHAT WAS MEANT BY SIGNIFICANT RESULTS. HE ASKED WHETHER THE RESULTS REFERRED TO HAD TO BE ANTICIPATED BEFORE THE DECISION WAS TAKEN TO SEND AN EMISSARY OR COULD FLOW FROM

THE DISCUSSIONS AFTER HE ARRIVED. THE PRIME MINISTER JOINED IN THIS REQUEST NOTING THAT CONVERSATIONS WITH FORMER SECRETARY KISSINGER LAST YEAR PRODUCED GOOD RESULTS WHICH FLOWED FROM THE TALKS. THE FACT THAT IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE TO IMPLEMENT THEM DID NOT DETRACT FROM THEIR POSITIVE QUALITY. HE ADDED THAT HE DID NOT THINK IT POSSIBLE TO STATE IN ADVANCE WHAT THE RESULTS MIGHT BE SINCE THESE WOULD DEPEND UPON THE UNDERSTANDINGS REACHED. HE SAID HE DID NOT KNOW WHAT MORE HE COULD DO ON RHODESIA EXCEPT SUPPORT THE OWEN EFFORT, WHICH HE WAS PREPARED TO DO. ON NAMIBIA, THE DISCUSSIONS WITH THE FIVE POWERS WERE PENDING AND THE WISHES OF THE SWA PEOPLE HAD TO BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION. HE DISPLAYED SENSITIVITY ON THE DOMESTIC FRONT SAYING THAT SOUTH AFRICA COULD NEVER ACCEPT DICTATION ON DOMESTIC POLICY.

4. I REASSURED THE PRIME MINISTER THAT NO ONE WAS TALKING ABOUT DICTATING. YOU WERE INTERESTED IN AN INDICATION OF HIS VIEWS ON ACTIONS WHICH SOUTH AFRICA MIGHT TAKE TO ADVANCE PEACEFUL SETTLEMENTS IN RHODESIA AND NAMIBIA AND HIS THINKING ON HOW PROGRESS MIGHT BE MADE ON THE DOMESTIC FRONT. THIS WOULD BE HELPFUL IN DECIDING WHETHER A VISIT BY A HIGH-LEVEL EMISSARY AT THIS TIME WOULD BE USEFUL.

5. THE PRIME MINISTER'S RESPONSE TO MY EFFORTS TO DRAW HIM OUT WAS EVASIVE. HE SAID THAT RESULTS CANNOT BE ANTICIPATED. THEY SHOULD FLOW FROM THE CONVERSATIONS AND NOT BE COMMITTED TO PAPER IN ADVANCE. HE ASKED THAT
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I CONVEY TO YOU THAT "HE THINKS IT WOULD BE WORTHWHILE TO HAVE THE DISCUSSIONS" AND THAT "HE WAS SURE THAT POSITIVE RESULTS CAN FLOW FROM THE DISCUSSIONS." LATER ON HE SAID THAT THE DISCUSSIONS WOULD: (A) PRODUCE A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE SITUATION, (B) CLARIFY MISUNDERSTANDINGS AND MISCONCEPTIONS, AND (C) PROMOTE PEACE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA WHICH WE ARE ALL LOOKING FOR.

6. WHEN THE DISCUSSION TURNED TO LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN RHODESIA AND NAMIBIA, THE PRIME MINISTER WAS SLIGHTLY MORE FORTHCOMING. ON RHODESIA HE SAID HE WANTED TO REITERATE TO YOU HIS SUPPORT FOR THE OWEN EFFORT AND TO GUARANTEE THAT HE WOULD SEE TO IT THAT SMITH LIVED UP TOWHATEVER AGREEMENT IS REACHED. ON NAMIBIA, HE SAID THAT LEADERS OF THE GROUPS PARTICIPATING IN TURNHALLE WOULD BE COMING TO CAPE TOWN NEXT FRIDAY, APRIL 22. HE WOULD BE SEEING THEM. AMONG THE ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED IS THE FIVE-POWER DEMARCHE. HE WANTED TO ACQUAINT THEM WITH ITS TERMS. (BOTH A ADDED LATER

THAT THE DISCUSSION WOULD ALSO INCLUDE THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE DEMARCHE FOR TURNHALLE.) IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TURNHALLE AGREEMENTS DEPENDED ON THEIR WISHES. IF THEY WANT ACTION THIS PARLIAMENTARY SESSION, THEY MUST ASK FOR IT BY THE MIDDLE OF MAY. HE STRESSED THAT ENABLING LEGISLATION FOR AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT DECIDES NOTHING ON A PERMANENT BASIS BECAUSE THE DECISIONS ON THE SHAPE OF THE INDEPENDENCE GOVERNMENT REMAIN TO BE TAKEN. I NOTED THAT SETTING UP AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT WOULD COMPLICATE REACHING AN INTERNATIONALLY ACCEPTABLE SOLUTION. HE DISAGREED ASSERTING THAT IT MAKES IT EASIER. ON THE DOMESTIC FRONT, HE WAS RELUCTANT TO SPEAK BEYOND SAYING THAT HE WOULD BE HAPPY TO EXPLAIN TO THE EMISSARY WHAT HIS LONGER TERM PLANS ARE.

7. IN THE END THE PRIME MINISTER ASKED THAT I CONVEY TO YOU HIS INTEREST IN RECEIVING THE VICE PRESIDENT. HE IS
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CONVINCED THAT IT WOULD LEAD TO POSITIVE RESULTS BUT WAS NO MORE SPECIFIC. HE SAID THAT IF YOU HAD ANY PARTICULAR QUESTIONS, HE WOULD BE HAPPY TO TRY TO ANSWER THEM. IT WAS CLEAR THAT HE REGARDS THE BALL IN OUR COURT, HAVING GIVEN WHAT HE REGARDS AS A FAVORABLE RESPONSE.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE, POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, CAT-B, MEETING REPORTS, VISITS, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 19-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977CAPET00591
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: EYES ONLY FOR THE PRESIDENT
Executive Order: GS
Errors: I
Expiration:
Film Number: N770002-0650
Format: TEL
From: CAPE TOWN
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 2
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770444/aaaabsl.tel
Line Count: 146
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: c1f4b4a2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NODS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: NODIS, ONLY
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS, ONLY
Reference: 77 STATE 85992, 77 CAPE TOWN 568
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05-Apr-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2768154
Secure: LOCK1
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER VORSTER
TAGS: PFOR, PDEV, SF, WA, RH, US, (VORSTER, BALTHAZAR JOHANNES)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/c1f4b4a2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009